U.S. Department of Education
2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 12TX18

School Type (Public Schools): (Check all that apply, if any) ☐ Charter ☑ Title 1 ☐ Magnet ☐ Choice

Name of Principal: Dr. Jose Covarrubia

Official School Name: Project Chrysalis Middle School

School Mailing Address: 4528 Leeland
Houston, TX 77023-3095

County: Harris County State School Code Number*: 101912071

Telephone: (713) 924-1700 E-mail: JCOVARRU@houstonisd.org

Fax: (713) 924-1704 Web site/URL: www.houstonisd.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Dr. Terry Grier Superintendent e-mail: tgrier@houstonisd.org

District Name: Houston ISD District Phone: (713) 556-6300

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Michael Lunceford

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)

2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2011-2012 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2006.

6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 or 2011.

7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.

9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.

10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
   - 170 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   - 42 Middle/Junior high schools
   - 55 High schools
   - 31 K-12 schools
   - 298 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 8021

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Urban or large central city

4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 7

5. Number of students as of October 1, 2011 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0		6	28	44	72
K	0	0	0		7	34	37	71
1	0	0	0		8	28	30	58
2	0	0	0		9	0	0	0
3	0	0	0		10	0	0	0
4	0	0	0		11	0	0	0
5	0	0	0		12	0	0	0
							Total in Applying School:	201

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

0 %	American Indian or Alaska Native
2 %	Asian
1 %	Black or African American
96 %	Hispanic or Latino
0 %	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
1 %	White
0 %	Two or more races
100 %	Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2010-2011 school year: 1%

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred ***to*** the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	0
(2)	Number of students who transferred ***from*** the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	3
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	3
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	201
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.01
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	1

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 43%

Total number of ELL students in the school: 87

Number of non-English languages represented: 2

Specify non-English languages:

Spanish and Vietnamese

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 94%

Total number of students who qualify: 188

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 0%

Total number of students served: 0

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

0	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	0	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	0	Specific Learning Disability
0	Emotional Disturbance	0	Speech or Language Impairment
0	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
0	Mental Retardation	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
0	Multiple Disabilities	0	Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	Full-Time	**Part-Time**
Administrator(s)	2	0
Classroom teachers	7	0
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	3	0
Paraprofessionals	2	0
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	2	0
Total number	16	0

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 20:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Daily student attendance	98%	97%	97%	98%	98%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**
Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2011 are doing as of Fall 2011.

Graduating class size:	_____
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	_____%
Enrolled in a community college	_____%
Enrolled in vocational training	_____%
Found employment	_____%
Military service	_____%
Other	_____%
Total	**0**%

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

☉ No

○ Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

PART III - SUMMARY

12TX18

Project Chrysalis Middle School was founded in 1995 in a two room temporary building on the campus of Cage Elementary. The creators, two "Teach for America" educators, believe in an ideology that all children deserve to be given the opportunity to learn and receive a quality education regardless of social-economic, race, ethnicity or status of the child. After much planning and preparation, Project Chrysalis opened its doors to a small group of 50 at-risk students all of whom live in the impoverished inner city area surrounding the historic Third Ward District. Today the enrollment has quadrupled to over 225 students in grades 6-8, 90% of the students are economically disadvantaged and 97% are Hispanic.

Project Chrysalis' mission is derived from the tenets of the Teach for America philosophy which aim to close the achievement gap between impoverished students and their more affluent peers. Key to the success of the school is a mission that is committed to creating a welcoming environment where students are encouraged to set goals, monitor their own progress, and be supported by teachers who are willing to individualize instruction to meet student needs.

"… Staff are committed to creating and maintaining an environment which ensures that each student reaches a high level of academic achievement by mastering grade level objectives set by the District, State and Nation. Students' success will be measured by frequent authentic and standardized assessments. We will utilize individualized intervention strategies, cooperative grouping and enriched curriculum... By providing multiple learning opportunities, our students will become critical thinkers, independent problem solvers, and academically prepared to be successful in the global world."

The faculty pride themselves on the fact that their mission and vision are woven together in all that they do each day.

The Project Chrysalis Vision:

- Achieving and maintain an Exemplary status along with a 98% attendance rate.
- Creating a school where Chrysalis teachers, students and parents work collaboratively to ensure academic excellence.
- Maintaining a place where professionals are role models, provide multiple avenues of intervention, create life-long readers, and engage students in positive community service.
- Creating a school where the betterment of our students is the common goal and where everyone is proud to be a part of the Chrysalis family.

Students start their morning together with breakfast being provided on a daily basis to ensure students have the energy and focus to engage in learning.

During the day, parents and students can be seen volunteering their time. Every family commits to 40 hours of volunteer work on an annual basis. This benefits students by providing adult role models. It builds school pride in parents and students, and it strengthens the bonds between home and school.

After school, students participate in a variety of activities such as soccer, basketball, volleyball, flag football, karate, newspaper, broadcasting, yearbook, art, math club, etc. These activities promote student self esteem, character, and physical fitness while providing a safe well-structured environment for latch key children. Such programs continue to be made available through 21st Century Funds and teacher

commitment to sponsoring afterschool sessions between the hours of 3:00 – 6:00 when students frequently need additional supervision.

Through the actions of many parents and teachers, Project Chrysalis has been able to maintain a Recognized or Exemplary Status since its inception.

Project Chrysalis remains a focal point in the community and has had the distinguished honor of appearing in Texas Monthly Magazine numerous times as one of the best schools in Texas. It has also received the Texas Business in Education Coalition Award, a very prestigious academic award, based exclusively on Commended Performance.

Notably, Project Chrysalis has performed at the Commended level for three consecutive years on all subjects.

In 2011 over 71% of students met commended standards in Reading. Another 56% were commended in math, 63% in Science, 91% in Social Studies and 85% in Writing – Meaning these students missed no more than 1-2 questions or made a perfect score. The 2011 Campus passing rates were equally high with 99% passing reading, 97% passing math, 100% passing science, 100% passing social studies and 100% passing writing.

With such outstanding student performance scores on state assessments, parents look for apartments close to Project Chrysalis knowing their children will receive a top ranked education despite the many risk factors their children will bring with them to the campus.

The Council of Great City Schools has consistently ranked Project Chrysalis among their top 10 schools. Currently, Project Chrysalis is ranked as the 4th best middle school in the City of Houston and 6th in the State of Texas. How does this happen? By keeping students' best interest as the center for all decision.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

In 1999 the Texas Legislature adopted the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test that all 3rd-12th grade students were to undertake. The TAKS is a criterion-referenced exam that measures the students' mastery of the statewide curriculum the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) in the core subject areas of Reading, Writing, Math, Science and Social Studies at the middle School level. Schools are able to earn 4 academic ratings based on their students' performance: Exemplary (90%-100%), Recognized (80%-89%), Acceptable (70%-79%) and Academically Unacceptable (69% and below). Project Chrysalis has achieved the highest two T.E.A. rankings of Exemplary and Recognized since 1999.

As an Exemplary campus for four consecutive years, Chrysalis embraces project based learning, rigor and relevance by all students taking Pre-AP classes, a data driven culture and the highest of expectations for all students regardless of their gender, sex, ethnic, cultural or socio-economic background. We are proud to state that the academic gap among students is virtually nonexistent.

The data demonstrates that Project Chrysalis students outperform their peers in reading and math. In 2010-2011 99% of the students passed the reading TAKS exam and 71% of the students achieved commended level (perfect score or missing only 1 or 2 questions). For mathematics, 97% of the students passed the TAKS math and 56% of the students achieved commended level. LEP v/s Non-LEP showed very little statistical differences. For reading, LEP students scored 100% passing with 50% commended and Non-LEP students scored 99% passing with 67% commended. For math, LEP students scored 93% passing with 43% commended and Non-LEP students scored 97% passing with 54% commended. There was also no statistical difference with the economically disadvantaged students. 99% of the economically disadvantaged students passed the reading with 70% being commended. And 98% of the students passed math with 57% commended. The success of the campus can be attributed to the faculty and staff, students, parents and community members. Additional information on the campus and its data can be found at the Texas Education Agency website at http://www.tea.state.tx.us.

There is also a distinct difference between Project Chrysalis and other middle school campuses. The campus offers AP Spanish and 100% of the students passed the AP exam and received both high school and college credit for the course. Students are also enrolled in Algebra I at the 8th grade level, take the End of Course exam and receive high school credit for the course as well. Chrysalis is also the only campus that has the majority of their 7th grade students sit for the SAT Exam. This year out of 7 National Student Award winners, 2 were from Project Chrysalis.

Throughout the last 5 years there has been little variation with the scores for any given content area. The trend has largely been upward and a slight variation averaging about 4 percentage points has been noted in the area of mathematics. Due to Chrysalis' small student population and the lack of funding, the challenge has been that of retaining a highly skilled mathematics teacher that is able to address the needs of students' at all three grades levels (6th-8th).

2. Using Assessment Results:

As a campus, Project Chrysalis believes that a commitment to data collection and analysis is paramount in terms of adjusting instruction, pacing, and curricula in order to meet student needs. At the onset of every academic year, teachers in all content areas administer diagnostic assessments in order to gauge student readiness levels concerning key objectives. Teachers focus their assessments on readiness standards, as well as the most important objectives from previous and future grade levels. Afterwards, teachers utilize this data to modify their unit and long-term plans accordingly. Specific weaknesses are targeted for the upcoming unit, while strengths can be harnessed and utilized as key levers in the future. This process of

data reflection not only allows teachers to identify potential areas of improvement, but also enables instructors to recognize current strengths within the student population that further assist in the mastery of additional objectives.

While the process of diagnostic analysis provides the statistical foundation for informed instruction at the beginning of the fall semester, teachers likewise collect and analyze data, both individually and collaboratively in content teams, throughout the entire school year, and for their personalized end of the year exams, which aim to create rigorous assessments well beyond the requirements of state standardized testing. After major projects, quizzes, and unit tests, teachers format the student mastery for each particular objective in a tracker located on our campus's local network. By submitting this data, the staff holds each another accountable for student mastery, since all teachers can evaluate and discuss the results. Moreover, classroom teachers then have the opportunity to determine which objectives are being mastered, which subpopulations are excelling or require remediation, and which learning goals will need to be taught and strengthened once again in the future.

At Project Chrysalis, teachers understand that the mere collection of data cannot impact instruction unless time is taken to reflect on student results in a strategic, concrete way. Consequently, teachers complete a five-step data reflection, which empowers them to examine and interpret the data more effectively. First and foremost, instructors categorize the students based on overall mastery level, which then identifies students who are proficient, almost proficient, or struggling. As a result, tutorial sessions and partner pairs can be arranged based on data, and not mere instinct alone. Afterwards, teachers characterize specific objectives from the unit as strengths or weaknesses, dependent upon quantitative results. This leads to teachers revisiting their long-term goals for the year. Instructors determine the impact of the current unit on these goals, as well as the viability of reaching these long-term objectives under the current scope, sequence, and execution of learning goals. If students will not currently be able to meet previously articulated standards, then instructors know they must revamp and retool their curriculum. Next, teachers select concrete instructional strategies that they would like to employ in their classrooms in light of recent data; staff members hold each other responsible for these modifications at their bimonthly data team meetings. Finally, teachers conclude their reflection by verifying quantitative and qualitative indicators of future successes, which assists instructors in discerning what the positive outcomes in their classroom must look like.

Even though data analysis is crucial for teachers, students and families are likewise integral to this process. Project Chrysalis students complete their own mastery trackers for major assignments and assessments in order to ascertain their current status in their classes, as well as their specific strengths and weaknesses. These trackers require follow-up actions from students, from retakes and tutorials to direct communication and possible conferencing with parents and families. By investing students and their families in tracking itself, data becomes more meaningful for the students, who can then work just as strategically on their academics as the teachers do.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Project Chrysalis actively seeks opportunities to help the broader educational community by sharing its best instructional practices and assessment techniques with professional associations and other campuses throughout the Houston area. In doing so, Project Chrysalis supports an even wider range of students than it directly serves.

The ten person faculty at Project Chrysalis regularly lead sessions for first and second year "Teach for America" corps members. During these sessions, new teachers are provided hands-on, interactive professional development centered on research-based instructional strategies and best practices. New teachers naturally form cohorts and have opportunities to network, share and to be observed by others.

The Project Chrysalis staff also lead cohorts for developing teachers. These individuals are teachers who are still honing in on and refining their instructional practices. They have typically identified a focus area to strengthen and improve. The Project Chrysalis team enjoys sharing their experience with creating end

of the year exams and unit assessments. The faculty models data interpretation, how to create open ended responses, higher level questioning, and how to accurately assess the mastery of student knowledge and skills. This type of training assists teachers in writing with the end in mind (Backwards Design), a planning technique that deepens the teachers' understanding of content and grade-level objectives.

Because Project teachers have volunteered to provide this type of training for Teach for America teachers, many teachers at Chrysalis have also been invited to share various other types of professional development with other campuses and teachers in the Houston area. One professional development that has been offered by the Chrysalis team is called "Integrating Pop Culture into the Lessons." Other trainings focus on holding high expectations in and out of the classroom, and speaking at All Corps Member (ACE) events.

When the faculty need another resource they often turn to each other. Therefore, Chrysalis teachers often attend professional development sessions across the district to sharpen their own skills and to keep abreast of current trends, technologies and venues.

Such practices ensure that the teachers at Chrysalis are informed about the state of education, the trends of the district and the needs of the urban at-risk student who may frequently move between campuses.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Project Chrysalis Middle School has one of the most at-risk student populations, yet the campus strives to build a strong home-school connection.

One of the initiatives is to provide a free breakfast to each child at school. The goals of the Free Breakfast Program are twofold – increase student attendance and ensure that every child has a nutritious meal to prepare him/her for learning throughout the school day. The underlying benefits include parents bringing their children to school on time, and the parents having a chance to informally interact with adults who speak the same language.

Due to the large number of Spanish speaking parents, all written communication is provided in Spanish and English. This helps the parents gain clarity and understanding about what their children are doing in school. It also brings a stronger sense of safety and well being when the parents know that they will be able to reach an adult in a timely manner who will understand and help them with their concerns.

During school programs and parent meetings, Project Chrysalis provides translators to facilitate dialogue knowing that open communication is imperative to student success and parent involvement. One example is Science Night. Parents and students explore the world of science through interactive booths where both the parent and child perform experiments using everyday household items. All of the instructions are in English and Spanish. Students benefit from the concept being reinforced; while, parents gain confidence and are less intimidated when helping their child with homework outside of the campus.

In addition, Project Chrysalis offers ESL classes for parents during school hours. Consistently, the campus sees that when the parents have confidence in their English, they volunteer at the school, chaperone and participate in many other projects. In turn they are given more opportunity to acquire the language to help their children with academic work while at home. As the content becomes more complex and difficult, the parent remains confident in knowing that he/she can communicate with the teacher to find out what their child is learning.

Finally, Project Chrysalis wants all events to be as convenient as possible for parents to attend. Therefore many events take place after 5 pm on school nights, and refreshments are provided. The doors are open and everyone is welcome.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The Project Chrysalis faculty adhere to the Texas Education Agency's framework of teaching the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills as well as follow the curriculum guidelines in the Houston I.S.D. Project CLEAR Scope and Sequence.

Teachers dedicate time during the summer to aligning state TEKS with the district scope and sequence for each content area. Student achievement data is analyzed and utilized to modify the curriculum so that it best fits the students who are being taught during a particular school year. This strategic plan guarantees that all of the required skills are being taught, the curriculum is being enriched, and that rigor and relevance are applied to student learning. It also fosters added academic value of more than one year and prepares students with Career and College Readiness skills.

Project Chrysalis students are enrolled in Pre-AP reading. The reading Pre-AP courses not only accelerate students to meet the TEKS standards at 2 grade levels but also to continuously integrate the English Language Arts curriculum so that students make connections between all content areas. Students are required to participate in debates, classroom discussions, and writing workshops. Students must also complete a research project that demonstrates mastery of the objectives learned but where the students show real world applications of the material.

All students in the mathematics program are required to take Pre-AP mathematics. Students must master both the content for their grade level and be prepared for the next grade level. Technically, students are being instructed in content for 2 grade levels at one time. For example, seventh grade students are learning the 7th grade curriculum and being prepared for 8th grade Algebra 1. All students in 7th grade take the 8th grade mathematics exam at the end of their 7th grade year and students in eighth grade take the Algebra 1 End of Course exam.

Pre-AP science is a composite of Life, Physical, Earth and Space instruction. Students are required to participate in both the science class and the accompanying lab where students use real life, hands-on experiments to enhance their learning. Students must utilize the scientific process in all aspects of their work and must develop a yearly project in an area that will improve the lives of others. The integration of reading, math and writing concepts into science is a key factor in the high achievement scores in science.

The Social Studies curriculum is centered on supporting core content courses. It utilizes narrative and expository text to increase student comprehension, mathematical objectives in relation to historical time-periods, and investigations of scientific discoveries that have shaped our past. Furthermore, students utilize their debate skills in discussions centered on the principles of government. This is a cross-curricular approach that yielded 100% of the students passing their state exam and 93% achieving a perfect score.

Students are enrolled in Spanish A and Spanish B beginning in 7th grade. The students must continue on the foreign language continuum in order to receive high school credit for Spanish. In 8th grade students take 2 semesters of Spanish via the online APEX system. Once students complete all of their coursework and final exam, students in 8th grade receive 1 high school credit for foreign language.

As part of our enhanced curriculum, students are enrolled in technology applications. Students work through a series of projects where they must incorporate all sorts of media (digital camera, video,sound, etc.) to create short films. Students must also integrate as many of the technology objectives that they have mastered into their projects. These projects are presented to different grade levels across the campus.

Students are also actively engaged in the Arts and Music. Students must take at least 2 semesters of fine arts. These classes are offered via the 21st Century Program and generally occur after school. Student inventories are used to determine the staffing needs for a particular course while students must commit to participation during the hours of 3:00-6:00 p.m. Courses include dance, drama, jousting, karate, basketball, flag football, volleyball and soccer.

Project Chrysalis students must also enroll in Physical Education. They are required to participate in the Texas Fitness Challenge and in the Houston Fun Run. The Texas Fitness Challenge focuses on enhancing the Physical Education TEKS including movement, social development, physical activity and health. It challenges students to actively participate in skills development, performance and competition. It allows for the school to purchase equipment/tools that will support physical activity. The Houston Fun Run centers on walking, running and developing a love for physical activity. Students are required to join the walking/running club at the campus.

By utilizing the State TEKS and District Scope and Sequence as a foundation for student learning, the teachers of Project Chrysalis are able to modify, adapt and extend the curriculum to meet individual needs and further prepare students for college and/or future careers.

2. Reading/English:

At Project Chrysalis, the English Language Arts team strives to consistently maintain high quality instruction and to increase student success, whether that means enhancing students' vocabulary, reading comprehension, or encouraging and cultivating effectiveness and creativity in written composition. Students' needs are addressed through a wide variety of instructional strategies, including Socratic Seminars, class debates, mock trials, student-driven discussions, and various writing workshops, among others. Strategic, but flexible grouping, extensive instruction in grammatical skills, and particular attention to English language conventions allow for struggling learners to reach grade level mastery; while extension and research opportunities enable the highest level students to continue their growth. Most importantly, teachers seek to create practical, real-world applications of the material, by which students can self-identify relevance in literacy and the skills necessary for verbal and written communication.

Since students come to Project Chrysalis from a wide variety of academic and linguistic backgrounds, the teachers seek to meet students where they currently are and actualize the very best of their potential. First and foremost, students' reading levels are assessed and evaluated in order to ensure appropriate, but challenging instruction. After analyzing diagnostic evaluations, teachers consider student data in light of the long-term and unit plans, thereby adapting a rigorous, but personalized curriculum that satisfies the needs of students, while also pushing them to even greater academic heights.

Perhaps unlike any other campus, Project Chrysalis teachers commit themselves to offering students opportunities for additional instruction and practice in order to ensure academic development and student mastery. Whether in the form of remedial or enrichment tutorials, students' struggles are steadily converted into successes and skills. To serve as an English teacher at Project Chrysalis means to commit oneself not only to excellence in instruction, but to insist on a student culture of excellence that magnifies student interest in literature, drama, current events, and a wide assortment of other media. Not only are students taught through varying learning modalities, but they are also challenged by an exceptional curriculum that offers rigor and relevance, and likewise fosters a sense of urgency and joy in the process.

3. Mathematics:

Like the other core content area teachers, Project Chrysalis Math teachers knows that math and science play a significant role in preparing students for future courses at the high school and college levels. The faculty believes that it is a fundamental duty to create a solid math foundation with students fully mastering mathematical concepts and skills that insure the success of the students in future years. In addition, teachers are focused on improving students' analytical and critical thinking skills.

All students are required to take Pre-AP mathematics courses in grades 6-8. In addition, students must enroll in Algebra at the 8th grade level and take the End of Course exam in Algebra in order to receive high school credit. Creating the necessary rigor at each grade level in math content is essential if students are to be master not only their grade level math content but also the content of the ensuing year. For example, 6th graders must master 6th and 7th grade math, 7th graders must master 7th and 8th grade math, while 8th graders must master 8th grade math and 9th grade Algebra I.

Every student is afforded the opportunity to revisit the content through the "Lifeline Program". If a student has not mastered a math concept, he/she may return to the teacher of record between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m. to have the concept explained or re-taught. This gives all students the confidence necessary to tackle a content area that they do not necessarily feel comfortable with. The program also encourages students to revisit and reinforce the concepts via relevant homework assignments and projects with real-world applications.

Through periodic data meetings and data analysis, Project Chrysalis teachers are able to determine immediate interventions that must be put into place for struggling students. Students are then required to attend tutorial classes after school and on Saturdays. After school tutorials are for 1 hour and Saturday tutorials are for 4 hours. Teachers directly focus on specific objectives that the student needs to master.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

It is the belief of Project Chrysalis that we not only have the responsibility to teach academic subjects, but also a duty to guide young men and women in becoming responsible citizens within a democratic society. The Social Studies/History curriculum at Project Chrysalis is committed to engaging learners in rigorous and relevant learning opportunities that guide students towards becoming both informed and enthusiastic citizens. Through the Social Studies curriculum at Project Chrysalis, students learn how to engage in debate, take and support a position, and use historical examples to guide their acquisition and discovery of knowledge in other core content courses. This discovery learning is nurtured through students' studying and unearthing of current events and the political processes that our national, state, and local governments continue to experience.

The Social Studies curriculum at Project Chrysalis is designed to support each of the other core content classes by supporting students in: Language acquisition, reading and writing comprehension, the application of mathematical objectives in relation to historical time-periods, and the investigation of scientific discoveries that have shaped both our past and will form our future. In particular, the Social Studies curriculum at Project Chrysalis is designed to increase comprehension of both expository and narrative texts through the use of active-reading strategies, literature circles, and other literacy-based strategies. In stressing the importance of writing well in the humanities, students are assessed on essays throughout the year by both their ELA and Social Studies teachers. Students also utilize their debate skills and foundation of the principles of government when discussing themes and concepts in other content areas. Designing this cross-curricular approach in a multitude of daily structures and instructional processes helps students reinforce the skills and knowledge necessary to demonstrate the highest levels of mastery on all core content grade-level objectives as set by the district, state, and the nation.

5. Instructional Methods:

Teachers deliver whole-group instruction through the "I Do, We Do, You Do" method. They model how to answer a question, solve a problem or perform an activity in a whole- class setting. Next, the teacher follows up with a guided practice where both students and teacher apply what was demonstrated in the "I do" phase. Lastly, the teacher lets students repeat the task independently to demonstrate understanding and mastery of the concept.

In addition to this model, Marzano's Instructional Strategies are embedded in lessons to facilitate students' mastery of daily educational objectives. Moreover, teachers provide students with assignments that have been adapted to meet individual levels of challenge. For instance, in Social Studies, a concept-

based project may be assigned to the students as part of the culmination of a unit. The assignment has varied ability levels and students are assigned a range of activities that support independent work at a level of difficulty that is neither too difficult nor too easy for the student to be challenged. Teachers then provide ongoing, timely, and relevant feedback throughout the project with emphasis being placed on providing a rigorous curriculum that is supported by summative and formative assessments which are reviewed by teachers and students.

In addition, classrooms have Smart Board Technology to promote student-teacher interactive lessons. Teachers and students have access to a wi-fi equipped cart with 30 laptops. Students often complete projects using various software, design presentation tools, and Web-Quests to enhance knowledge beyond the direct-teacher instruction.

Since August 2011, Project Chrysalis has also utilized Edmodo.com to provide students with access to assignments after school and on the weekends. This has helped students to complete homework in a timely manner. While daily homework is a major component of the instructional plan, the foremost beneficial aspect of this technology is for students to develop lifelong time management and personal responsibility.

Most importantly, students requiring additional help receive after school tutorials and small group instruction at least once a week for an hour or more. Specific subject matter instructional strategies are used to achieve maximum student growth. One example is the 5E Instruction model (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, and Evaluate) utilized by the science department in order to facilitate various hands-on experiences for students. With this model and the various other methods and tools, students are enabled to become critical thinkers and problem solvers.

6. Professional Development:

In order for any school to substantially further its progress and maximize the potential of its human capital, teachers must attend on-going professional development. Project Chrysalis fully recognizes such a philosophy and embraces it. Staff members not only respond favorably and constructively to district-wide initiatives through collegial participation on campus, but they also actively seek professional development classes and seminars at the local and state levels knowing that acquiring new strategies will bolster student achievement.

Moreover, certifications are updated on a yearly basis. Instructors have the opportunity to continuously improve their practice by attending content specific seminars from the College Board, Laying the Foundation Organization, the Rice Summer Institute, and other eminent organizations. These sessions offer faculty invaluable insight concerning the skills, content, and assessments awaiting middle school students in high school and beyond. Information gathered at such seminars also allows teachers to vertically align pre-A.P. classes and curriculum during summer planning sessions.

Most recently, Project Chrysalis's has invested time and attention in the district-wide Margaret Kilgo initiative which emphasizes the importance of data collection, and data interpretation for at-risk students and urban districts. With the focused consideration of objective-driven assessments and instruction, the Project Chrysalis staff has worked tirelessly to revamp curriculum, long-term plans, and assessments in order to ensure that all instruction is "backwards-planned" in the manner in which students will ultimately be evaluated.

Over the course of the school year, teachers meet on a bimonthly basis in content-based data teams in order to analyze, characterize, and plan according to quantitative measurements of student mastery. These collaborative opportunities often identify deficiencies or weaknesses in instruction. Teachers then seek remedy through collaboration and by asking for assistance in the form of internal or cross-curricular networking, online coursework, and more traditional forms of professional development.

In addition, due to Project Chrysalis sizeable gifted/talented student population, all core content teachers

obtain the necessary Gifted and Talented training needed in order to serve this student population's academic needs.

In conclusion, professional development will continue to play a pivotal role on the campus. If Project Chrysalis is to realize the full potential of the students, then the instructors must also commit themselves to constant improvement and exposure to the most effective instructional strategies.

7. School Leadership:

Project Chrysalis is a campus where everyone is part of the leadership team and everyone plays an integral role in the success of the students. Every faculty member is a life line to the student in need, regardless of the issue, the day of the week or the time of day. It is not uncommon for faculty members to share their home telephone numbers and it is not uncommon for students to be speaking with their teachers throughout the evening about classroom assignments.

At Project Chrysalis, the principal and assistant principal consistently focus on the students. Every decision that is made at the campus level is made based on what is in the best interest of the students. Everyone understands and accepts that some decisions may not be "popular" and that these decisions are not to be taken personally but rather from a neutral perspective which puts the students' best interest first. Simply put the administrators' philosophy of instruction is that effective instruction determines the educational life or death of children.

Both the principal and assistant principal are educational leaders. They encourage the faculty to step out of the box and to see instruction, discipline, parental involvement, service, and college readiness, from a uniquely different perspective. They challenge the faculty to achieve more than what they think is possible. For example, if a benchmark exam shows 90% of the students mastering the objectives, the first question is, "Why wasn't it 95%?" Faculty members are then challenged to analyze the data and make a plan of action that will enable the students to achieve beyond what the numbers indicate. The Chrysalis family is coached into the depth and breadth of the instructional piece so that they can achieve greater success with the students. Every member is challenged day in and day out to perform at their optimal level and to take the necessary instructional risks to bring about higher academic achievement for all students.

The principal and the assistance principal are extremely supportive of the faculty and staff. They provide all of the resources that are needed in order to get the jobs done correctly. The administrative team's philosophy is that "we" cannot ask the faculty to do anything without giving them the tools necessary to be successful.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 6 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: 2007/2008/2009/2010/2011 Publisher: Texas Education Agency

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard & Commended	93	100	96	92	80
Commended Performance	44	62	61	29	28
Number of students tested	70	66	49	48	46
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard & Commended	94	100	98	93	82
Commended Performance	45	62	61	25	34
Number of students tested	66	60	46	44	38
2. African American Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested		1			1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard & Commended	93	100	96	91	80
Commended Performance	43	60	60	28	27
Number of students tested	69	62	47	47	45
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested					4
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard & Commended		100	100	93	
Commended Performance		38	73	13	
Number of students tested	7	13	11	15	7
6. white					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested		2	1		
NOTES:					

12TX18

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 6 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: 2007/2008/2009/2010/2011 Publisher: Texas Education Agency

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard & Commended	99	100	100	100	98
Commended Performance	57	68	57	44	58
Number of students tested	70	66	49	48	45
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	98
Number of students alternatively assessed					1
Percent of students alternatively assessed					2
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard & Commended	98	100	100	100	100
Commended Performance	56	67	54	43	63
Number of students tested	66	60	46	44	38
2. African American Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested		1			1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard & Commended	99	100	100	100	98
Commended Performance	57	66	55	45	57
Number of students tested	69	62	47	47	44
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested					3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard & Commended		100	100	100	
Commended Performance		54	55	20	
Number of students tested	7	13	11	15	7
6. white					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested		2	1		
NOTES:					

12TX18

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 7 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: 007/2008/2009/2010/2011 Publisher: Texas Education Agency

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard & Commended	100	96	98	84	87
Commended Performance	69	50	13	29	20
Number of students tested	62	48	46	38	55
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	97	100
Number of students alternatively assessed				1	
Percent of students alternatively assessed				3	
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard & Commended	100	96	100	86	87
Commended Performance	68	57	12	31	21
Number of students tested	57	47	43	35	52
2. African American Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	1			1	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard & Commended	100	96	98	84	87
Commended Performance	68	50	11	27	20
Number of students tested	59	46	45	37	55
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested				3	3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard & Commended		90			
Commended Performance		50			
Number of students tested	6	10	8	5	
6. white					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	1	1			
NOTES:					

12TX18

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 7 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: 2007/2008/2009/2010/2011 Publisher: Texas Education Agency

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard & Commended	100	98	98	95	98
Commended Performance	71	67	35	34	24
Number of students tested	62	48	46	38	54
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	97	98
Number of students alternatively assessed				1	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed				3	2
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard & Commended	100	98	98	94	98
Commended Performance	70	66	35	37	25
Number of students tested	57	47	43	35	51
2. African American Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	1			1	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard & Commended	100	98	98	95	98
Commended Performance	71	65	33	32	24
Number of students tested	59	46	45	37	54
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested				3	2
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard & Commended		100			
Commended Performance		70			
Number of students tested	6	10	8	5	
6. white					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	1	1			
NOTES:					

12TX18

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 8 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: 2007/2008/2009/2010/2011 Publisher: Texas Education Agency

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard & Commended	98	91	90	86	88
Commended Performance	57	25	38	24	33
Number of students tested	46	44	39	49	42
Percent of total students tested	100	100	98	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed			1		
Percent of students alternatively assessed			3		
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard & Commended	100	92	89	86	88
Commended Performance	58	24	42	25	27
Number of students tested	43	37	36	44	33
2. African American Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested			1		1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard & Commended	98	90	89	85	88
Commended Performance	56	24	37	23	34
Number of students tested	45	42	38	48	41
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested			2	2	1
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	1	6	4		1
6. white					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested		1			
NOTES:					

12TX18

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 8 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: 2007/2008/2009/2010/2011 Publisher: Texas Education Agency

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard & Commended	100	98	100	100	100
Commended Performance	93	68	79	69	50
Number of students tested	46	44	39	48	42
Percent of total students tested	100	100	98	98	100
Number of students alternatively assessed			1	1	
Percent of students alternatively assessed			3	2	
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard & Commended	100	97	100	100	100
Commended Performance	93	62	81	72	52
Number of students tested	43	37	36	43	33
2. African American Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested			1		1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard & Commended	100	98	100	100	100
Commended Performance	93	69	79	68	49
Number of students tested	45	42	38	47	41
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested			2	1	1
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	1	6	4		1
6. white					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested		1			
NOTES:					

12TX18

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	96	96	94	87	85
Commended Performance	56	48	37	27	26
Number of students tested	178	158	134	135	143
Percent of total students tested	100	100	99	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	1	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	3	3	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	97	96	96	88	85
Commended Performance	56	50	38	26	26
Number of students tested	166	144	125	123	123
2. African American Students					
Met Standard					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	1	1	1	1	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	96	95	94	86	85
Commended Performance	54	46	36	25	26
Number of students tested	173	150	130	132	141
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard	0	0			
Commended Performance	0	0			
Number of students tested	0	0	2	5	8
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard	93	93	91	79	
Commended Performance	42	34	34	9	
Number of students tested	14	29	23	20	8
6.					
Met Standard					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	1	4	1	0	0
NOTES:					

12TX18

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	99	98	99	98	98
Commended Performance	71	67	55	50	42
Number of students tested	178	158	134	134	141
Percent of total students tested	100	100	99	98	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	1	2	2
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	3	2	2
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	99	98	99	98	99
Commended Performance	70	65	55	51	44
Number of students tested	166	144	125	122	122
2. African American Students					
Met Standard					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	1	1	1	1	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	99	98	99	98	98
Commended Performance	71	66	54	49	41
Number of students tested	173	150	130	131	139
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	0	0	2	4	6
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard	100	100	100	90	
Commended Performance	50	62	26	15	
Number of students tested	14	29	23	20	8
6.					
Met Standard					
Commended Performance					
Number of students tested	1	4	1	0	0
NOTES:					

12TX18